



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CLASS SPECIFICATION

CLASSIFIED

DISEASE RESEARCH SCIENTIST

Class No. 004317

SENIOR DISEASE RESEARCH SCIENTIST

Class No. 004321

■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

To perform a wide variety of tests in a veterinary laboratory, to research communicable diseases in animals, and to perform related work as required.

■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Disease Research Scientist:

This is the first working class of the series. Under general supervision, incumbents perform a variety of routine laboratory tests. The Disease Research Scientist differs from the Senior Disease Research Scientist in that the latter performs the more complex tests and analyses, develops and refines new assays, and may supervise laboratory staff in the absence of the supervisor.

Senior Disease Research Scientist:

This is the lead level class of the Disease Research scientist series. Under general supervision, this class performs the more difficult tests, and leads professional and technical laboratory personnel. This class reports to the Veterinary Pathologist.

■ FUNCTIONS

The examples of functions listed in the class specification(s) are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the class(es). Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such functions are a logical assignment for the position.

Essential Functions:

Disease Research Scientist

1. Performs a wide variety of specialized and routine laboratory analyses including microbiology, immunology, serology, virology, parasitology, electron microscopy, hematology, urinalysis, clinical chemistry, slide-stains, AGID, molecular biology and toxicology.
2. Makes microbiological analyses of specimens to determine the presence of communicable diseases such as Exotic Newcastle Disease, West Nile Virus, Avian Influenza, salmonellosis, plague and tularemia.
3. Performs routine quality control.
4. Assists in the preparation of procedure and safety manuals.
5. Prepares reagents used in test performance.
6. Performs routine equipment maintenance and calibration.
7. Enters test results into computer terminals.
8. Maintains and orders lab supplies.
9. Provides responsive, high quality service to County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public by providing accurate, complete and up-to-date information, in a courteous, efficient and timely manner.

Senior Disease Research Scientist

All the functions listed above; and,

1. Performs highly technical calibration, maintenance, and trouble-shooting procedures on analytical instruments.

2. Evaluates new procedures.
3. Develops and refines assays.
4. Leads and trains professional and technical staff.
5. Maintains records.
6. Prepares reports.
7. Discusses test results with veterinarians.

■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

The following apply to both classes:

- Principles and practices of clinical laboratory test procedures.
- Laboratory safety procedures.
- Quality control procedures.
- Laboratory equipment operation.
- Computer operation.
- Medical terminology.
- Routine equipment maintenance and calibration.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.

Senior Disease Research Scientist (in addition to the above):

- Complex test designs.
- Principles and practices of lead work and training.

Skills and Abilities to:

The following apply to both classes:

- Perform laboratory tests and procedures accurately.
- Record, analyze, and interpret test results.
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing.
- Establish effective working relationships with management, employees, employee representatives and the public representing diverse cultures and backgrounds.
- Treat County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Assess the customer's immediate needs and ensure customer's receipt of needed services through personal service or referral.
- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in biology, chemistry, or in one of the life sciences; AND

Disease Research Scientist:

1. One (1) year of full-time experience, preferably within the last three (3) years, as a Disease Research Scientist performing a wide variety of laboratory tests. Experience must have been in an approved veterinary diagnostic laboratory, research laboratory, and pharmaceutical or biotech laboratory.

Senior Disease Research Scientist:

1. Three (3) years of experience within the last five (5) years as a Disease Research Scientist performing a wide variety of tests in an approved veterinary diagnostic laboratory, research laboratory, pharmaceutical or biotech laboratory AND, specific experience in at least two of the following areas within the last five (5) years: microbiology, serology, immunology, toxicology, hematology, urinalysis, clinical chemistry, molecular biology, and electron microscopy. ; OR,

2. Eighteen (18) months of experience as a Disease Research Scientist in the County of San Diego.

Notes: Completion of appropriate course work from an accredited college or university may substitute for the experience requirement on a year-for-year basis. California Public Health Microbiologist or a Clinical Lab Scientist certificates or a graduate degree are highly desirable.

■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classification(s). Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.

Continuous upward and downward movement of the neck. Frequent: sitting, repetitive use of hands to operate pipettes, lab equipment, microscopes, computers, printers and copiers. Occasional: walking, standing, bending and twisting of neck, bending and twisting of waist, squatting, simple grasping, reaching above and below shoulder level, and lifting and carrying files weighing up to 10 pounds.

■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

Working Conditions

Office environment; exposure to computer screens. Applicants must be willing to be immunized against, Rabies and other infectious diseases. Applicants must be willing to work with specimens that may contain infectious agents including but not limited to , Rabies, influenza, WNV, plague, and tularemia .

Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Misdemeanor and/or felony convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a background investigation.

Probationary Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in these classes shall serve a probationary period of 6 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

New: May 8, 2001

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Disease Research Scientist (Class No. 004317)
Senior Disease Research Scientist (Class No. 004321)

Union Code: PR
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Variable Entry: Y
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